



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH

October 2011

By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS cooperatives are producer- and user-owned businesses that give their members a stronger position in the marketplace by multiplying the power of one by the power of many; and

WHEREAS cooperatives meet a wide range of needs, such as helping farmers and ranchers market and process their crops or livestock and acquire farm production supplies; offering credit services; operating cooperative housing and food stores; and delivering electricity and telecommunication services to rural America; and

WHEREAS the nearly 30,000 U.S. cooperatives have a combined impact of more than \$650 billion annually on the U.S. economy; and

WHEREAS cooperatives are committed to strengthening their communities, in part by keeping profits local and paying patronage refunds to members; and

WHEREAS cooperatives represent democracy and capitalism at their best;

NOW, THEREFORE, in recognition of the vital role that cooperatives play in improving economic opportunity and the quality of life in rural America, I, Thomas J. Vilsack, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, do hereby proclaim October 2011 as National Cooperative Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about cooperatives and to celebrate cooperatives' accomplishments with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of September 2011, the two-hundred thirty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America.


THOMAS J. VILSACK
Secretary